

Excellence in Virginia Government Award Criteria

The L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University is pleased to recognize outstanding achievements with the Excellence in Virginia Government Awards (EVGA). EVGA celebrates people and organizations in the public and private sectors who have made significant contributions to the practice of government and the well-being of our communities and citizens.

Community Enhancement Award

- An individual, group or government entity may be nominated for this award.
- This award recognizes outstanding commitment to improving the quality of community life in Virginia. The recipient of this award has established a reputation for exceptional community service.
- Through actions and words, the recipient must have made a discernible, sustainable positive impact on the quality of community life in Virginia that is applicable to other public service areas and communities.
- For this award, community may be defined broadly and may recognize initiatives that benefit citizens of the entire commonwealth, or one county, town or city. Community is also defined as a population that is served regionally.

Nominators: Share examples of this nominee's involvement in the community (professional and charitable organizations, etc.) and show how the nominee's work has improved life for Virginians.

Grace E. Harris Leadership Award

Named after the late Dr. Grace E. Harris, a trailblazer who broke down many barriers as an African-American woman and whose vision and leadership had tremendous impact at VCU, in the community and beyond. Harris believed, "As citizens of the community, we have a responsibility to make changes where changes are obviously needed."

- An individual may be nominated for this award.
- This award recognizes an individual who has made a discernible, sustainable positive impact on the quality of life in Virginia through public service.
- The recipient is widely recognized by his or her peers as an extraordinary collaborator, who possesses exceptional honor and integrity.
- This award recognizes an individual Virginian whose career represents the highest values of public service and citizenship and who has made a substantial contribution to the good of the commonwealth and the community.

Nominators: Share examples of this nominee's leadership and vision in professional and charitable work that has improved life for Virginians.

Hill-Robinson Expansion of Freedom Award

Named for two champions of civil rights, attorney Oliver Hill and Judge Spottswood Robinson.

- An individual may be nominated for this award.
- This award recognizes a sustained commitment to securing equal rights and justice for all people by empowering citizens.
- The recipient is widely recognized by his or her peers as possessing exceptional honor and integrity and as having made meritorious contributions to the security and well-being of others. Special consideration will be given to those nominees who have made a substantial contribution to advancing the freedoms protected under the Virginia Bill of Rights.

Nominators: Cite examples of how the nominee has worked to secure equal rights and justice for all people and their contribution to advancing the freedoms protected under the Virginia Bill of Rights.

Innovation in Government Award

- An individual, organization or government entity may be nominated for this award.
- This award recognizes the recipient's innovative work has resulted in increased efficiency, effectiveness, or other improvements that affect how a government entity performs, in support of, or in delivery of service to, its constituents.
- The reforms introduce a unique and fundamental change in governance, policy, problem-solving, technology or other operational element within the scope of the recipient's mission or responsibilities.
- The reforms must address an important public need and produce meaningful change within an organization or for constituents within a community.

Nominators: Describe how the nominee's innovative reforms have resulted in increased efficiency and effectiveness in how a government entity performs in delivery and support of service to its constituents.

Public-Private Partnership Award

- An individual, business, local or state government agency or other entity may be nominated.
- This award recognizes the recipient's inventive creation or maintenance of a successful public-private partnership which has delivered a measurable improvement in public service resulting in lower cost, improved quality, or greater efficiency for citizens.
- The partnership can involve a new way of offering existing services, but must either be the first example in Virginia of a public-private partnership offering its particular service, or must be able to demonstrate unsurpassed efficiency and ingenuity within the nominee's practice or service area.
- The partnership program receiving this award must have been fully operational for at least one year.
- The successful nominee must be committed to fiscal responsibility and sustainability in an effort to maintain its own operation, and must be able to provide tangible evidence of constituent satisfaction.

Nominators: Describe the organization of the partnership and its desired outcome. Please describe the achievements (actual outcomes) of the partnership. Emphasize measurable impact, for example: how many people did the partnership serve? How many dollars did they save or raise?

Unsung Heroes Award

- The Unsung Heroes Award recognizes an individual Virginian who has provided distinguished and exceptional service as a career government employee in the commonwealth, with local or state government.

- The recipient must have significant longevity of public service to the commonwealth.
- The recipient must be a resident of Virginia.

Nominators: In what way has the nominee provided distinguished and exceptional service? How have they made an impact through their work?

Lifetime Achievement Award:

- An individual may be nominated for this award.
- This award recognizes an individual Virginian whose career represents the highest values of public service and citizenship and who has made substantial contributions to the good of the commonwealth.
- The recipient must be an individual whose personal or professional contributions span a minimum of 20 years. The recipient must also be a resident of Virginia.
- Potential areas of influence may include: elected office, lobbying, policy implementation, technology, education, law enforcement, urban/regional planning, public administration or government service.

Nominators: Describe the nominee's substantial contributions in the potential areas of elected office, lobbying, policy implementation, technology, education, law enforcement, urban/regional planning, public administration, or government service.